

Commission Chair – PAUL GEORGE



Mayor of Yakima in 2004 and 2005, was appointed to the Washington Horse Racing Commission Jan. 9, 2006 by Governor Christine Gregoire. He joined the Commission after a four-year term on the Yakima City Council that concluded in December 2005. A resident of Yakima for 40 years, George has maintained a high profile in the community beginning in 1957 as an employee of the Yakima Herald-Republic newspaper, the last eight years as its sports editor. George left the newspaper in 1971.

George is no stranger to the pari-mutuel racing industry; having served in its ranks for more than 25 years in various capacities. In 1971 directors of Yakima Valley Turf Club Inc hired him as general manager of Yakima Meadows racetrack. In 1984, he resigned to become marketing director of Portland Meadows.

After the 1984-85 season in Portland, George and wife, Janet, moved to Billings, Montana where he took employment as director of communications for United Tote, Inc. A publicly traded company (NASDAQ), United Tote was then the newest national supplier of computerized wagering systems to pari-mutuel tracks. United Tote enjoyed great growth particularly in new racing states during his 11 years with the firm – its customer base growing from 59 in 1985 to 127 in two dozen states in 1989 when United Tote merged with the Autotote Corporation.

George retired from United Tote in 1996 and the following year returned to Yakima to become simulcast director for Yakima Meadows - the track then owned and operated by the Central Washington Fair Assn. In December 1998, Yakima Meadows ceased operations after 40 years of business on the fairgrounds.

George, who was widowed in 1999, has a son and two daughters - all grown - and three teenage grandsons.